

## **SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

### **ASSABET RIVER RAIL TRAIL COMMITTEE**

With the purchase of the trail easement from the Maynard line to Sudbury Road completed in 2009, our committee continued to explore routes to continue the trail to Hudson. In the spring, Clark University graduate students undertook a project to use GIS and other data to map potentially suitable routes to make that connection from Sudbury Road to Hudson. Although the results were interesting, the committee felt that none of the routes were feasible.

In June the committee reported to the Selectmen that we were stymied in our efforts to find a suitable route to connect to the trail in Hudson, and had gone as far as we could. In July the Selectmen voted to dissolve the Rail Trail Committee, and voted to form a Multi-use Path Committee.

Rail Trail activities continued. Several representatives of the Town attended an August meeting of the Metropolitan Planning Organization in Boston, where we learned that monies were still available for the design and construction of the Stow portion of the trail, and that Stow might be able to join the existing Acton-Maynard design project, which was expected to restart soon. The November Special Town Meeting approved the expenditure of \$46,000 of CPA funds as Stow's share of the expected design cost of the "Track Road" portion. The Selectmen held a public meeting for discussion and input about trail uses and users, trail surfacing options and trailside amenities. They then developed a questionnaire for use at other public meetings and online for additional public input. The questionnaire closed on January 15, 2011.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Rising, Chairman

### **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE**

The Elementary School Building Committee was formed following the 2007 Annual Town Meeting, which voted to support an addition/renovation at Center Elementary School. As outlined by the selectmen, the ESBC duties are to:

*Direct and oversee the renovation and addition to the Center School, as recommended by the School Building Task Force and approved by the residents of Stow in May 2007. To include bringing a firm estimate of cost to Town Meeting for approval. To include hiring design services, contractor and other professionals as required. The Committee shall use the final report of the School Building Task Force as well as the Stow Schools Master Plan in their work. Committee members will need to be versed in the requirements of the Mass. School Building Authority (MSBA) and ensure that the building project meets all the requirements for potential reimbursement.*

2010 opened with the committee completing the design development phase, receiving approval from the MSBA and then moving quickly into a search for a contractor. We reviewed and approved a number of design features, from color of brick to acoustic options. We met with various town boards, particularly Planning and Conservation, to get site approval, working with all to develop acceptable order of conditions. Because of significant efforts by our design team, Symmes Maini McKee Architects, we were able to go to bid on the first of May. The public bid laws we function under required pre-qualification of all potential bidders and their subcontractors, but we still received eight qualified bids and the contract was awarded to P.J. Stella with a bid of \$23 million, \$5 million less than we'd expected.

After many years of hard work, it was a joy to invite the community to the groundbreaking on June 17, highlighted by all the elementary school children attending with yellow "hard hats", and a presentation of a "check" for approximately \$18 million from State Treasurer Tim Cahill and MSBA Executive Director Katherine Craven. The "real" work started shortly thereafter as the fences went up, the trucks arrived and the development of the site began. We were grateful to Shelburne Farm and the Painters for taking ownership of the Old Blacksmith Shop and relocating it up on the farm where we are sure it will be well tended.

The committee's responsibilities during construction are quality and cost control. We now meet monthly with the design team (Project Manager and Architects) to hear updates, and vote on change orders and payment requisitions. Our project manager has a clerk of the works on site acting as our "eyes" on a daily basis, and through him we keep tabs on the contractor and his subcontractors. It took some time to work out the working relationship; the experience of our design team kept us confident that we were in good hands in these early days of negotiation. There were inevitable challenges and surprises through the fall: under all the vegetation, wetlands were closer to the building site than expected; as the old wing was taken down, some unexpected asbestos pipe needed to be carefully removed; and ledge was more prevalent in parts of the site than anticipated. But things moved forward through the end of the year, when the heaviest snowfall in memory began to fall. Though the steel arrived a bit late, the team started raising the structure in spite of weekly snowfalls.

As 2011 arrives, we are expecting the schedule to be a bit behind, but still see the transfer into the new wing over the winter vacation 2011 (grades 4 and 5), and grand opening in September 2012. We're pleased to report that the MSBA is already paying us approximately half of our expenses (50.85% of allowable costs) on a monthly basis, saving the town thousands of dollars in interest expense. Our final revised budget should be accepted this month by the MSBA, confirming the savings from our low bid. Fundraising continues and [www.stowrecess.org](http://www.stowrecess.org) continues to seek the community's help in finding sources of funds to offset the taxpayer burden.

The ESBC wants to acknowledge the patience, enthusiasm and support of staff and teachers, not to mention the students of Pompo and Center Schools, as we move through the construction project. The impact is felt throughout the school community, and yet the optimism of a new school carries us all through the bumps and challenges. We encourage residents to keep track of our progress through the town website, where all meetings, minutes and documents are updated regularly.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen S. Sturgis, Co-Chair  
Amy Finkel Hastings, Co-Chair; Architect  
Michael Wood, Superintendent  
Stephen Quinn, Contractor; Planning Board  
Craig Martin, Building Inspector  
Gary Bernklow, Finance Committee

Lynn Colletti, School Committee  
Charlie Kern, Selectman  
David Korn, Associate Member  
Lisa D'Alessio, Associate Member  
Gregory Irvine, Ex-officio; Principal,  
Pompo & Center Schools

### **MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE**

We are delighted to report that the Master Plan was finished late in the Fall of 2010, accepted by the Planning Board in January, 2011 and presented to the Stow Selectmen in February 2011. It can be read on the town website or at the Randall Library.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia Rising, Chairman  
Steve Dungan  
Charles Kern  
Karen Kelleher

Rebecca Mattison  
Roy Miller  
Kathleen Willis

### **POMPO USE STUDY COMMITTEE**

The Pompo Use Study Committee, which reports to the Board of Selectmen, is composed of five members, each serving an indefinite term. The Committee is responsible for finding the best use possible for the Pompositticut School Building after the Nashoba Regional School District has vacated the Building.

In the past year we have been gathering information by utilizing on-line surveys, newspapers, public forums and interviewing those departments, groups and businesses that are interested in space at the Pompositticut building. It is our mission to be sure that everyone is heard and we deliver an accurate and well-planned idea for the building.

The Committee wants to thank the Board of Selectmen, the Town Administrator, and all the Town Departments that supported us through the year, and especially the citizens that took the time to share their ideas and thoughts with us.